

REMARKS

Claims 1-8, 16-22, 31-44, 70-77, 88, 89, 97-108, 113-115, 118-120 and 150-203 were pending. By this Amendment, claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 34, 37, 41, 42, 150-153, 155-157, 159, 172, 174, 175, 181, 182, 186-189, 192-194 and 197-200 are amended, claims 3, 31-33, 70-77, 97-103, 118-120, 165-168, 173, 191, 195 and 203 are canceled, and new claims 204-221 are added. Therefore, claims 1, 2, 4-8, 16-22, 34-44, 88, 89, 104-108, 113-115, 150-164, 169-172, 174-190, 192-194, 196-202, and 204-221 are pending for consideration, with claims 1, 16, 34, 152, 156, 181 and 192 being independent claims.

I. Restriction Requirement

The Office Action asserts a Restriction Requirement between claims in Group I (claims 1-8, 16-22, 34-44, 88, 89, 104-108, 113-115, 150-164 and 169-202) and claims in Group II (claims 31-33, 70-77, 97-103, 118-120, 165-168 and 203). Applicants hereby affirm the election to prosecute the claims in Group I. Claims in Group II have been canceled.

II. 35 U.S.C. §112 Rejections

Items 2 and 3 of the Office Action reject claims 2, 186, 187, 197 and 198 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. These claims are amended to obviate these rejections. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections is requested.

III. Claims 16-22 and 160-164 are Allowed

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's allowance of claims 16-22 and 160-164 in Item 32 of the Office Action.

IV. Claims 1, 2, 4-8, 34-44, 88, 89, 104-108, 113-115, 150-159, 169-172, 174-190, 192-194, 196-202 and 204-221 are Allowable

Item 35 of the Office Action indicates that claims 3, 38, 114, 115, 151, 173, 174, 178, 180, 184, 188, 191, 195, 199 and 202 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter. As is detailed below, claims 3, 173, 191 and 195 are written in independent form. In addition, the features of claims 178 and 195 are incorporated into other independent claims.

A. Independent Claims 1, 34, 181 and 192

Independent claim 1 is amended to incorporate the features of allowable claim 3. Thus, claim 1, and claims 2, 4-8, 88, 89, 150 and 151 which depend from claim 1, are allowable.

Independent claim 34 is amended to incorporate the features of allowable claim 173. Therefore, claim 34, and claims 35-44, 104-108, 113-115, 169-172 and 174-180 which depend from claim 34, are allowable.

Independent claim 181 is amended to include the features of allowable claim 191. Therefore, claim 181, and claims 182-190 which depend from claim 181, are allowable.

Independent claim 192 is amended to include the features of allowable claim 195. Therefore, claim 192, and claims 193, 194, 196-202 and 204-221 which depend from claim 192, are allowable.

B. Independent Claims 152 and 156

Independent claim 152 is amended to incorporate the features of allowable claim 178. Accordingly, Applicants submit that independent claim 152, and claims 151-155 which depend from claim 152, are allowable.

Independent claim 156 is amended to incorporate the features of allowable claims 193 and 195. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 156, and claims 157-159 which depend from claim 156 are allowable.

Applicants also note that independent claims 1, 34, 152, 156, 181 and 192 are amended to eliminate the specific expert system method formerly recited in each of the claims.

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 23/2825, under Order No. A0744.70003US00 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: February 17, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

By _____
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